

# Control of Contractors Procedure

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## **CONTROL OF CONTRACTORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS PROCEDURE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This procedure should be referred to when appointing contractors to carry out tasks for the University. It describes good practice which, when followed, should reduce the likelihood of incidents and ensure compliance with health and safety standards.

As an employer and controller of premises, the University has a statutory duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees and students and to take steps to ensure its activities do not endanger others who may work on or visit its premises, including contractors.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Supervising Officer:** The Supervising Officer is responsible for selecting a competent contractor to undertake works required in their area of control. The Supervising Officer is the main point of contact for the contractor and, as such, is responsible for ensuring that the contractor receives the information they need prior to works commencing. This includes site induction, site orientation, a copy of this procedure and a signed hard copy of the Notification to Work (NTW) and, as required, Permit to Work (PTW). The Supervising Officer must also request and review contractor documentation, including risk assessments and method statements (RAMS), COSHH assessments, competency certificates, plant certification etc.

The Supervising Officer must have a basic understanding of health and safety legislation and practice, in order to achieve the requirements outlined above. Training and advice can be obtained from the Health and Safety Team.

**Estates Permit Issuer:** Only a few individuals within the Estates team are authorised to issue permits. The Engineering Services team mainly fulfil this role. In order to issue a PTW such personnel must have sufficient technical expertise as well as a thorough understanding of health and safety legislation, practice, and the importance of PTW systems in maintaining control of high risk activities. Estates Permit Issuers are responsible for reviewing relevant documentation prior to permit issue, stipulating controls required for permit use, managing potential conflicts, communicating the status of permits with relevant Estates (and other e.g. Insurance, H&S) personnel and for the retention of PTW documentation.

**Contractor:** The contractor is responsible for the provision of relevant documentation to the Supervising Officer upon request. The contractor must not begin works on University premises without first signing-in at the security office, undertaking a site induction and site

orientation. The contractor must be familiar with the University Contractor Site Rules as well as the content of this procedure, the NTW and, as required, the PTW.

The contractor must be able to provide evidence of competence via the completion of the pre-qualification questionnaire and submission of competency certificates.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Definitions**

**Supervising Officer**- Any member of University staff who instructs work to be carried out on behalf of the University.

**Estates Permit Issuer** – Authorised members of the Estates department who are responsible for issuing permits.

**Notification to Work (NTW)** – Electronic form, completed by Supervising Officers, which contains key details of all works undertaken across the University.

**Permit to Work (PTW)** – Paper based form supplied by Estates Permit Issuer, which is used to identify additional controls required for high risk activities. These include Electrical Works, Confined Space Entry, Roof Access, Hot Works and Permit to Dig.

**Contractors** - Companies, agents, service providers or sole traders employed to undertake specific tasks or deliver services to the University.

**Contractor Controlled Sites** - An area of UWS accommodation which is clearly identified as a contractor only site, where there is no physical interaction between contractor's staff and University staff or students, and which does not affect the operations of the University. Contractor controlled sites are normally the responsibility of the main contractor (and appropriate consultants, if applicable), and such a site shall be contained within a defined perimeter. Contractor controlled sites may range from the construction of new buildings to works within existing buildings which have been vacated.

### **Contractor Pre-Qualification**

The Estates department maintains a Contractors Database listing all contractors utilised for Estates initiated works. Prior to working for the Estates department, all contractors are required to complete a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ - see Appendix 1). The completed PQQ is used to assess the contractor's safety performance and competence. Contractors who demonstrate capability and competence are added to the Estates department Contractors Database. The Estates department will review the database on an ongoing cycle.

It is expected that Supervising Officers engaging contractors on their own behalf will also conduct suitable and sufficient contractor competence assessments, using an abridged version of the PQQ form which can be obtained from the Estates department. The details can then be inserted into the NTW.

### **Information for Contractors and Visitors**

Every contractor is required to sign-in at campus security where they will be issued with a copy of the Contractor Site Rules document (Appendix 2) and a visitor's badge. All Supervising Officers are then required to provide each contractor with a site orientation and school/departmental induction. Prior to works commencing, Supervising Officers shall ensure that the contractor is fully aware of the contents of the Notification to Work and, if required, the Permit to Work. Each contractor should have a printed and signed copy of each document. Contractors must also carry a hard copy of their risk assessment and method statement.

### **Road Safety and Car Parking Arrangements**

The campus is equivalent to a pedestrian precinct where pedestrians have right of way. Drivers must therefore exercise due care and attention at all times and observe the speed restrictions. Contractor vehicles may only park on the University campus with the express permission of the Estates department. If permission is granted, the contractor will be issued with a temporary permit which must be displayed at all times. Inconsiderate driving or parking will result in contractor's vehicles being denied future access to the campus.

### **University Building Services**

Contractors shall not interfere with or connect to the electricity, gas, water or other services of the University without the specific permission of the Supervising Officer and Estates Permit Issuer, where required. Normal use of standard sockets to connect portable electrical equipment is excluded from this requirement. However, such equipment shall conform to the testing and inspection requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

Access to sub-stations will only be granted by following the procedures detailed in 'Working with Electrical Systems'. Entry to electrical sub-stations is prohibited unless the contractor is in possession of a valid "Limitation of Access" document signed by an authorised member of the University Estates Electrical Services team.

### **Fire Precautions**

If the work of a contractor introduces additional fire hazards into an area, e.g. hot works, solvents and other flammable materials, they are responsible for providing the appropriate

type of fire-fighting equipment and personnel (e.g. Fire Watch). The Supervising Officer must also consult the University Fire Safety Officer before the work starts. This can be done via the Notification to Work form. Contractors will be notified by the Supervising Officer when fire alarm tests are scheduled that may affect their work.

All contractors are required to be fully familiar with the following:

- the nearest means of escape in case of fire
- the location, type and method of operation of fire-fighting equipment
- the location and method of operation of the nearest fire alarm
- the procedure to be followed in case of fire or on the activation of the fire alarm

**All contractors must comply with the Universities fire evacuation procedures at the sound of the alarm.**

### **Behaviour on University Premises**

Inappropriate behaviour, horseplay, foul, abusive or inappropriate language and the playing of media such as music etc is not permitted on University premises.

### **Control of Noise**

Consideration must be given to University business and the sensitive nature of its operations e.g. exams or lectures. If noise is expected to be a significant issue, persons affected will be alerted via the "Department Affected by Restrictions" section of the Notification to Work form, or by other appropriate means. The Estates department should be contacted in advance if high levels of noise is expected as they will be able to identify any time restrictions. Note that there should be no noise from construction or demolition activities (including deliveries or offloading), liable to cause disturbance to neighbouring properties outwith the following time:

- 08.00 hours to 19.00 hours Monday – Friday
- 08.00 hours to 13.00 hours on Saturdays
- No such activities should be anticipated on Sundays, unless specifically arranged through the Estates Department and Security.

### **First Aid**

Contractors are responsible for the provision of First Aid for their staff on University premises unless otherwise agreed with the Estates Department and the Health and Safety Team. First aid provision out with core hours (8:45-16:45) is limited, therefore contractors must provide their own arrangements out with these times.

## **Reporting of Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences**

Details of any incidents occurring on University premises must be reported to the Supervising Officer. They, in turn, will make a full report on the University's internal accident report form which is then submitted to the University Health and Safety Team. All incidents that occur on University premises must be notified to the Supervising Officer as soon as practicable, and with immediate effect for all serious / RIDDOR reportable incidents.

## **Out of Hours Working**

Any works undertaken out with core hours must be suitably controlled and supervised. The Supervising Officer must record any intention to work out with core hours on the NTW form, alongside the precautions in place for such works.

## **Notification to Work (NTW)**

The purpose of the NTW is twofold. Firstly, it is used to alert the University Estates department to works scheduled across the campus. This then allows the Estates department to provide advice and guidance on relevant building issues. Secondly, it offers Supervising Officers the opportunity to provide and receive relevant health and safety information to/from contractors engaged to complete the works.

This electronic form must be completed by the Supervising Officer prior to the commencement of any site works on any University campus. The NTW must be completed in advance of works beginning to enable the Supervising Officer to conduct pre-qualification questionnaires, review contractor risk assessments and method statements, consult with the Estates department over the presence of asbestos, and liaise with schools/departments potentially affected by the works etc.

On completion of the NTW and providing there are no objections from the Estates department, the system will generate an automatic email to the Supervising Officer. This email will direct the Supervising Officer to print the NTW and communicate the content with the contractor. Both the Supervising Officer and contractor will be required to sign the NTW form as a declaration that the contents have been understood and will be adhered to. All contractors must retain a printed copy of the NTW for the duration of the work scope.

The Estates department actively monitor the NTW submissions on a daily basis and have the authority to reject NTW forms that are not completed with sufficient detail, or that otherwise provide cause for concern. If the NTW form is rejected, the system will automatically alert the Supervising Officer and the works must not commence until suitable remediation is put in place. See Appendix 1.

## **Permit to Work (PTW)**

For higher risk works that require an extra level of control, a specific PTW will be required and includes the following activities:

- Entry into electrical switch rooms
- Work on electrical switch gear in switch rooms
- Confined Spaces
- Digging
- Hot Works
- Roof Access

The intention for works to include a permitted activity will initially be identified via the online NTW form. If a PTW is required the system will automatically generate an email containing instructions on how to do this. The Supervising Officer will be directed to contact Estates Business Support in the first instance, who will then direct the Supervising Officer to the relevant Estates Permit Issuer. Each permit will have a unique identifier number to enable the hard copy permit to correspond with the online NTW.

Only dedicated members of the Estates team are authorised to issue permits. These will be issued in duplicate so that a copy remains in the Estates office and a copy is provided to the Supervising Officer/Contractor. The Estates Permit Issuers will liaise with each other on a daily basis to ensure that there are suitable lines of communication in regard to PTW that are in operation. This is a critical component of any PTW system and must be fully implemented in order to ensure the safety of all those involved.

The Supervising Officer must collect the PTW on the day that works are due to commence. The Supervising Officer must be in possession of all relevant documentation, such as contractor RAMS, competency certificates, plant certification, rescue plans and all other relevant documentation required by the Estates Permit Issuer. These documents must be reviewed by the Estates Permit Issuer before handover of any PTW. These documents should be copied and retained in the PTW folder held in the Estates Office and retained for a period of 6 years.

Each PTW will ask for details of the start and end date for the works. If there is any change to these dates, the PTW must be returned to the Estates Permit Issuer in order for them to grant an extension or suspension of the works. Upon completion of the works, the Contractor must contact their Supervising Officer who is required to sign the declaration at the bottom of the PTW and then return the PTW to the Estates Permit Issuer for further sign-off. The Estates Permit Issuer must ensure that cancelled PTW's are communicated with all other Estates Permit Issuers and any other relevant personnel. As above, the

signed PTW must be retained in the PTW folder held in the Estates Office and retained for a period of 6 years.

As well as the University Estates department, the Health and Safety Team will be notified of all PTW applications and will have the opportunity to provide comment. This will also enable both departments to conduct site inspections of such activities, as a means of confirming that controls stipulated on the PTW are adhered to. See Appendix 2.

### **Hot Work Permit**

Contractors who intimate that Hot Works will be undertaken will be required to demonstrate to the University that safer alternatives were given due consideration. The use of flame, or the application of heat (as in welding, burning, generation of sparks or use of blow lamps) is prohibited in many areas of the University. Contractors must seek prior permission and obtain a PTW from the Estates Permit Issuer before commencement. In order to issue a Hot Works PTW, the Estates Permit Issuer must be assured that the contractor is competent to complete the works and that there are suitable and sufficient control measures in place. The contractor will be expected to provide their own firefighting equipment and fire watch personnel.

All NTW forms that indicate that hot works will be carried out will automatically generate notification to the University Fire Safety Officer. There may also be insurance considerations for works involving the application of heat; where there is any doubt the University Senior Risk & Insurance Officer must be consulted. The University insurance policy requires the following restrictions when any works are being undertaken which involves the application of heat by means of electric oxyacetylene, other welding or cutting equipment, angle grinders, blow lamps, blow torches, hot air guns or hot air strippers. **These must be followed and communicated to contractors, and overseen as appropriate:**

- The area in the immediate vicinity of the work (in the case of work carried out on one side of a wall or partition including the opposite side of the wall or partition) must be cleared of all loose combustible material. All other combustible material must be covered by sand, overlapping sheets or screens of non-combustible material
- At least 2 adequate and appropriate portable fire extinguishers in proper working order must be kept in the immediate area of the works and used immediately if smoke, smouldering or flames are detected
- A fire safety check of the working area must be made after completion by the contractor and before leaving the working area, with a further check carried out after 30 minutes. All hot works must cease 60 minutes before leaving the campus

- Blow lamps and blow torches must be filled in the open, must not be lit until immediately before use and extinguished immediately after use
- A competent person must be appointed to act as an observer to watch for signs of smoke, smouldering or flames (not applicable to the application of heat by means of blow lamps, blow torches, hot air guns or hot air strippers)
- Heating by use of asphalt, bitumen, tar, pitch or lead heaters must be carried out in the open in a vessel designed for the purpose, and if carried out on a roof the vessel must be placed on a non-combustible heat insulating base.

### **Confined Space Permit**

Contractors' employees should not enter any confined space where there may be specified risks, including dangerous fumes or lack of oxygen, without having a PTW and taking all appropriate actions to monitor the atmosphere in the confined space and confirm that it is safe to enter. It must never be taken for granted by any contractor that a confined space has been made "safe" by the University. Consideration for confined space rescue will also have to be considered prior to PTW issue.

### **Roof Access Permit**

Any access to, or work on, University roofs will require a Roof Access Permit issued by the relevant Estates Permit Issuer. Work on flat or sloping roofs often entails particular hazards, especially if work on or near fragile materials is involved. The contractor is reminded that they are responsible for the provision of suitable access equipment such as crawling ladders, crawling boards, edge protection, etc. Additionally, there must be a suitable rescue plan.

Contractors are advised that fume cupboard outlets are present on the roofs of several University buildings and that toxic or flammable fumes may be discharged. The Chief Technician of the particular department will be consulted by the Supervising Officer so that any hazards can be incorporated into the NTW and PTW form, and any precautions to be taken can be addressed in the contractor's risk assessment and method statement

### **Electrical Permit**

A contractor will only be issued with an electrical permit if the UWS Permit Issuer i.e. Estates Department Electrical Services Manager is satisfied of the capability and competence of the individual carrying out the work.

The electrical permit holder (recipient) must immediately supervise all members of the contractor working party so as to ensure that only work as detailed on the electrical permit is undertaken, and that this is done in a safe manner. The UWS Permit Issuer should ensure that the contractor receiving the electrical permit fully understands all details and

safety precautions that are required to undertake the work safely, as detailed on the electrical permit. This can be achieved in the following ways:

- Fully explain at the point-of-work where the circuit is to be proved dead and all safety precautions to be taken
- Listen to the recipient read the electrical permit aloud and confirm accuracy
- Question the recipient by asking relevant open questions (those which require more than a simple “yes” or “no” reply).

An electrical permit will only be issued after the UWS Permit Issuer is satisfied that:

- The electrical equipment/conductors to be worked on will be isolated from all voltage sources, and the means of isolation secured by individual locking and tagging
- The equipment/conductors will be proved dead at the point-of-work
- The UWS Permit Issuer is satisfied that the electrical permit recipient is competent and fully understands all the necessary safety precautions to complete the task as detailed on the electrical permit.

It is essential that this work is carried out with the permission and engagement with the UWS Estates Department who are the competent authorities for both low and high voltage electrical systems within University premises.

### **Permit to Dig**

Any digging or breaking ground including tree planting on University premises will require a Permit to Dig, issued by the relevant Estates Permit Issuer.

The Estates department will make available all information regarding underground services including pipes, cabling and structures. However, this cannot be deemed exhaustive or completely accurate and further cable avoidance technology should also be used. It is expected that all digging operations are fully investigated, risk assessed, and details are contained within the RAMS to prevent any damage or injury. These procedures will be reviewed prior to permit issue.

### **Limitation of Access**

Before issuing a Limitation of Access, the UWS Permit Issuer should positively identify the scope and limits of the work to be carried out, and the physical extent of the work at the location. Before offering a Limitation of Access, the UWS Authorised Person must:

- Accompany the prospective recipient to the location where the work is to be undertaken

- Confirm with the recipient in detail the exact extent of the work activities to be undertaken, including the scope and limits
- Show the prospective recipient the area in which the work is to be undertaken
- Indicate to the recipient all items of electrical equipment in or adjacent to the working area
- Draw to the attention of the recipient any special instructions or safety measures noted in the Limitation of Access

The acceptance of the Limitation of Access makes the person undertaking or supervising the defined work responsible for all activity taking place. This person is not to leave the location of the work or to undertake any other activities while the work is in progress. During any temporary absence of this person from the location of the work, the work is to be suspended, and adequate safety precautions taken. The UWS Permit Issuer is responsible for ensuring that:

- Any flammable or hazardous materials introduced into the area during the work activity are removed when the activities cease
- Emergency escape routes, emergency exits and access to essential electrical equipment has not been obstructed

When the work has been completed, the UWS Permit Issuer must check that the location has been left in a clean and tidy condition and is secured against unauthorised access.

### **Work Involving Asbestos**

UWS Estates Department maintains an Asbestos Management Plan and hold an Asbestos Register for all buildings. It is the responsibility of the Estates department to maintain these documents and offer assistance for any works that may require the removal of asbestos or could disturb asbestos containing materials.

Asbestos must be considered from the outset and will form part of the NTW process. Supervising Officers completing the NTW must confirm with the Estates department whether asbestos is present and record this on the NTW form. If asbestos is present or suspected, the Supervising Officer must then liaise with the Estates department to agree a safe way forward.

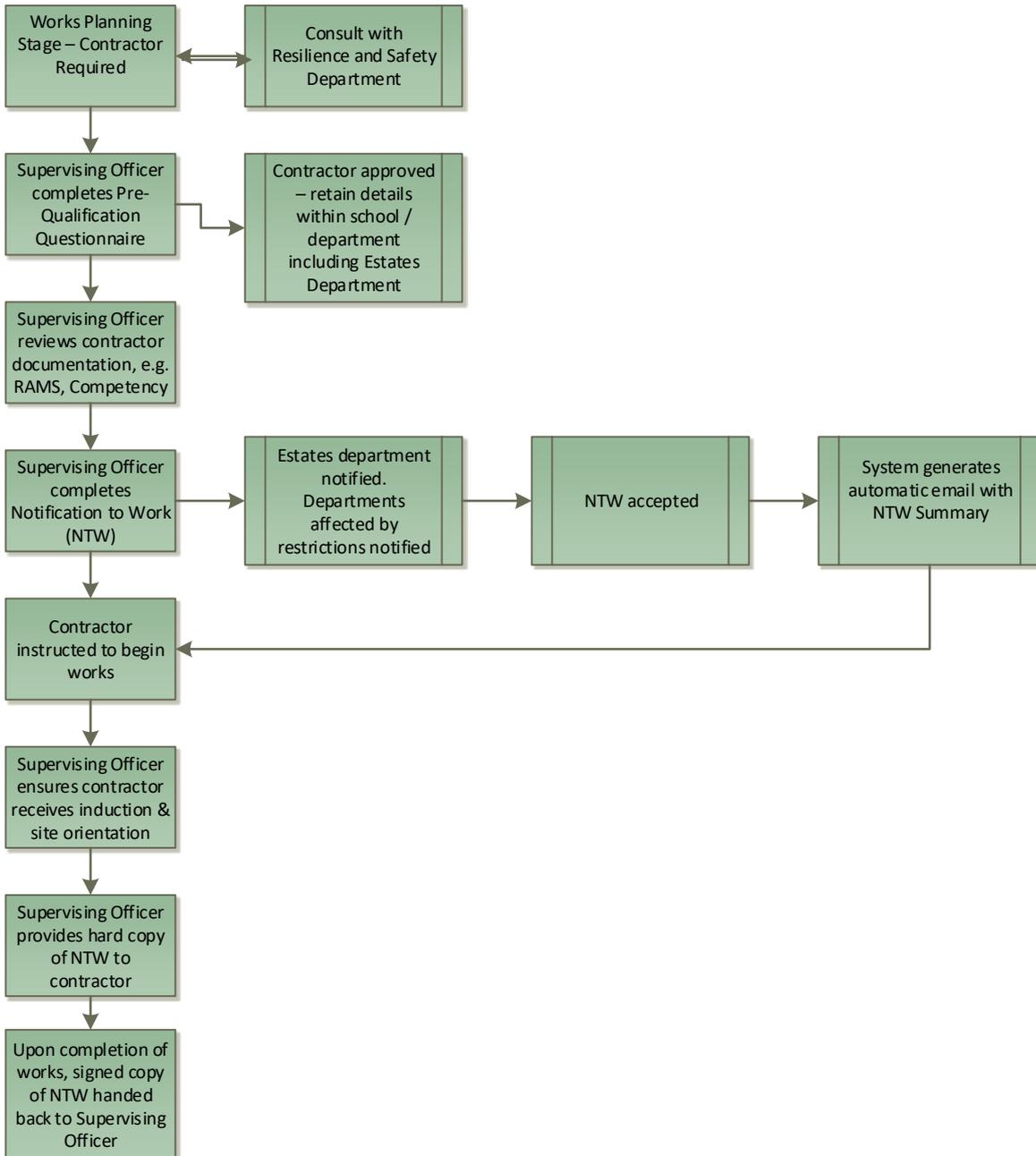
### **Routine Service Contracts**

Schools and Departments sometimes engage companies to carry out regular servicing contracts, e.g. on computer equipment, microbiological safety cabinets, laboratory equipment, office equipment, vending machines, etc. This procedure, including the requirement for a NTW to be suitably and sufficiently completed still applies. However, if

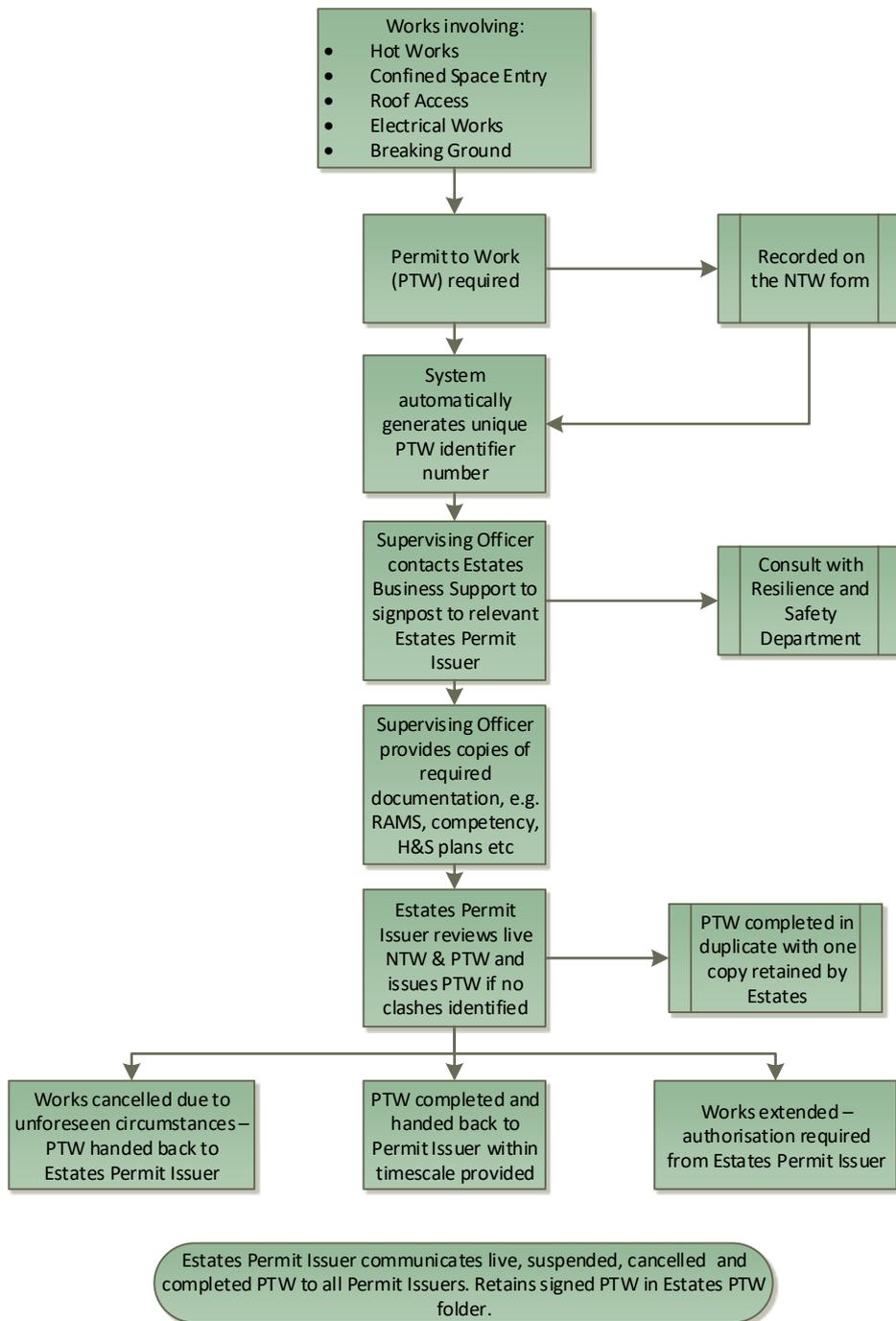
the risks are not likely to change from visit to visit then it is acceptable for the Supervising Officer to complete a NTW, which lasts for the duration of the contract (up to a maximum of one year). This is only permitted for routine service contracts of a low risk nature.

The Supervising Officer and contractor should be aware that if any change in risk to either or both sets of employees is foreseen, then this must be reflected in the issue of an updated NTW. The system will prompt Supervising Officers to review their NTW on a 3 monthly basis.

**Appendix 1 – Notification to Work**



**Appendix 2 – Permit to Work**



**Appendix 3 – Insurance for Contract Works**

